

Message Text

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42

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

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R 011117Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5138

INFO AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MONROVIA 1725

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, LI, VS

SUBJ: DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER TRAN VAN DON'S VISIT TO LIBERIA

1. GVN DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER DON VISITED MONROVIA MARCH 26/27. DON MET WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT ON MORNING OF MARCH 27 AND BRIEFED HIM THOROUGHLY ON CURRENT SITUATION IN SOUTHEAST ASIA. FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT, DON CALLED ON ME AND WE HAD AN HOUR'S CHAT MOST OF WHICH DEVOTED TO REMINISCENCES OF VIETNAMESE SCENE DURING MY TOUR IN VIETNAM 1962/65. DON SAID THAT HE HAD BRIEFED PRESIDENT ON SITUATION IN SVN BEFORE GENEVA ACCORDS, THAT WHICH PREVAILED IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE ACCORDS, THE DRAMATIC UPSURGE OF NORTH VIETNAMESE INFILTRATION OF PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT, AND THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND AS HE KNEW IT TODAY. HE SAID HE MADE A STRONG APPEAL FOR NON-ALIGNED COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY THOSE IN AFRICA, TO SUPPORT SOUTH VIETNAM IN ITS HOUR OF NEED. ALTHOUGH SOUTH VIETNAM WAS AT SOME DISTANCE FROM AFRICA, THE ISSUES AT STAKE IN SEA WERE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO ALL COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY SMALLER ONES. DON FELT THE MEETING WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT HAD GONE WELL, ALTHOUGH HE HAD RECEIVED NO COMMITMENTS FROM TOLBERT.

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2. DON WAS NOT SPECIFIC AS TO HOW HE THOUGHT CURRENT SITUATION

WOULD EVOLVE. HE BELIEVED THAT NOW MORE THAN EVER IT WAS NECESSARY TO TRY TO CONSTITUTE THE NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR RECONCILIATION AND TRY TO NEGOTIATE A POLITICAL SOLUTION. HE RECOGNIZED THAT THIS MIGHT PROVE MORE DIFFICULT NOW THAT NORTH VIETNAMESE MILITARY WERE IN THE ASCENDENCY. AT NO TIME DID DON MENTION US ASSISTANCE OR LACK THEREOF.

3. DON CONFERRED ORDER OF KIM KHANH ON FONMINISTER DENNIS AND WAS HIMSELF DECORATED BY DENNIS WITH RANK OF GRAND COMMANDER IN LIBERIAN ORDER OF THE STAR OF AFRICA.

4. AT A SMALL, INFORMAL DINNER AT VIETNAMESE EMBASSY RESIDENCE FOLLOWING DECORATION CEREMONY AND RECEPTION, CONVERSATION DID NOT GET DEEPLY INTO SUBSTANCE. DON WAS INTERESTED IN LEARNING NAMES OF PERSONS INVOLVED IN ABORTIVE COUP AND APPEARED RELIEVED THAT HE WAS NOT IN SVN FOR THIS ONE.

5. DON LEFT EVENING OF MARCH 27 FOR TORONTO TO VISIT HIS FAMILY. HE SAID HE WOULD RETURN TO AFRICA FOR HIS VISIT TO TOGO, ALTHOUGH DATE AND TIME HAD NOT YET BEEN FIXED.

6. COMMENT: IF FONMIN DENNIS' REMARKS AT HIS INVESTITURE INTO ORDER OF KIM KHANH ARE ANY INDICATION OF GOL'S RESPONSE TO DON'S DEMARCHE, GVN MUST BE DISAPPOINTED IN RESULTS OF DON VISIT HERE. SEEKING OUTRIGHT SUPPORT IN ITS STRUGGLE AGAINST COMMUNIST ATTACH AND SUBVERSION, DON HEARD FROM DENNIS ONLY PLATITUDES ABOUT "BUILDING BRIDGES," "BREAKING WALLS" AND "REMOVING BARRIERS" IN "OUR ONE WORLD" (LATEST SHIBBOLETHS, FROM PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S ANNUAL MESSAGE.). DENNIS NOTED THAT DESPITE DIFFERENCES IN CULTURE AND GEOGRAPHY, THERE ARE "DEFINITE SIMILARITIES IN THE OBJECTIVES AND FOREIGN POLICIES OF GOL AND GVN." (*) IT WOULD SEEM THAT GVN CANNOT PLACE MUCH HOPE IN GOL'S ASSUMING LEADERSHIP ROLE IN NON-ALIGNED OR OTHER INTERNATIONAL GROUPINGS ON BEHALF OF GVN.
MANFULL

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